

happy new year!

Torrance

Press-Herald

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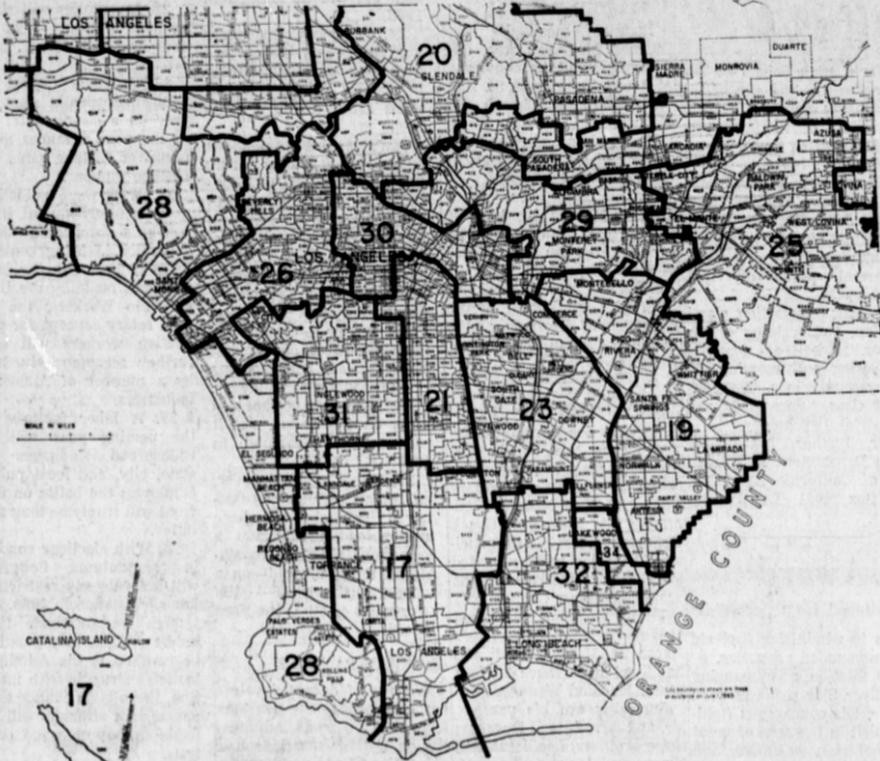
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PAGES



NEW CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS . . . Map shows new Congressional District boundary lines established by a reapportionment bill signed into law earlier this month. Torrance is divided between the 17th District, represented by Democrat Cecil R. King,

and the 28th District, where Republican Alphonzo Bell is the congressman. Bell's district was the largest in the state and one of the largest in the nation prior to the reapportionment.

Councilmen May Decide Fate of Bus System at Tuesday Session

By NATALIE HALL
 Press-Herald Staff Writer

The fate of the Torrance Municipal Bus System may very well be decided once and for all at Tuesday's 5:30 p.m. meeting of the Torrance City Council.

The question of what to do with the costly municipal bus line has been debated for months, with the majority of councilmen favoring sale of the system to the Southern California Rapid Transit District.

Contract for the sale has been ready for councilmen's approval since mid-November but councilmen asked for more time to look into civil service aspects of the reassignment of city bus drivers. The council was to have given final approval at its Dec. 19 meeting, but Councilman Ross Sciarrotta Sr. asked for two more weeks to study the effect of RTD bus takeovers in other cities.

THE PROPOSED contract calls for RTD to buy 15 municipal buses for \$110,000 in cash, with the city keeping a 16th bus for use on "special occasions." The purchase price includes the fare boxes and spare parts inventory. The contract also states that the city shall pay RTD \$70,000 per year for each of the next two calendar years following the sale. In return for this subsidy, the city has the guarantee that RTD will maintain all current routes and schedules during the two-year period.

When the two years are up, the city will have the option of continuing the subsidy. If the subsidy is discontinued, the city will lose all control over routes and scheduling. After the two-year period,

the city may also choose to add to the present service, or discontinue parts of it. In any case, the city must pay RTD whatever operating loss results from the change.

The contract also calls for the Rapid Transit District to extend Torrance Line One from its present terminus at 9th and Broadway to 6th and Main Streets, via Broadway and 6th Street.

Primary reason for the council's desire to unload the municipal bus system is the drain on the city's budget. When the city began subsidizing the bus lines in 1952, the annual cost was \$409. Pro-

jected bus department loss for the current fiscal year is \$100,000, plus \$26,000 for a new bus.

ACCORDING to William W. Dundore, finance director for the city, the bus fare would have to be raised from a base rate of 25 cents to 40 cents in order for the bus line to break even. However, the higher figure would only work out if the number of bus riders remained constant. Past experience shows that fare boosts mean fewer passengers. RTD plans to raise basic rate to 30 cents.

Torrance municipal buses

normally should have a useful expectancy of 12 years, according to Assistant City Manager Jerome L. Scharman. However, some of them are as old as 17 years and the city has not kept to its schedule of purchasing one new bus per year, he added.

The reasons why the bus system is so costly can be attributed to:

- High labor costs;
 - Increased mileage to serve intensive residential development;
 - Lack of passengers.
- "This is just not a bus-riding town," Scharman said. (See FUTURE, Page A-2)

THE BABSON REPORT

1968 to Be Year of Opportunity

By ROGER W. BABSON
 (C) 1967 Business Statistics Corp.

The coming year threatens to be one of varied and recurring crises. Virtually no area of human activity will be spared . . . social, economic, political, or international. After years of progress and prosperity, the American people will be faced in 1968 with many decisions that will prove difficult to make and even tougher to carry out.

Don't expect the final solution to 1968's many problems to be worked out during the year ahead. But the manner in which our nation tackles its predicament will determine whether the U. S. will be able to strengthen its position as world leader . . . or be toppled during succeeding years and re-

duced to an inferior standing.

To be without hope is to sin. And we do have hope that our citizens and their government will rise to defeat the many antagonists—inflation, social corruption, greed, crime, fear, and despair—that are pressing upon us as the new year begins. It is said that the Oriental concept of crisis is opportunity. In that sense, we predict without reservation that 1968 will hold opportunities unlimited for our country.

1. Now that the pound has been devalued, perhaps our greatest opportunity for the year ahead is to prepare a strong defense for the dollar. We forecast that after some early fumbling both the Congress and the Federal Reserve will move with

determination to protect our dollar.

2. The effects of the battle to save the dollar promise to be unpleasant. After an early-year surge to new highs for dollar values and production, business will find the going rougher as the months unfold. Scarcer and more costly money will take its toll of growth.

3. Major stimulation to the economy in the early part of 1968 will come from a scramble by auto and allied lines to make up for production lost in 1967, combined with a stockpiling of steel and aluminum in anticipation of strikes later next year in these activities.

4. Some additional escalation of the Viet war will occur next year. But we have already experienced the major impact on business of

Silver Star Given To Local Navymen

Witnesses Help Robbery Victim

Witnesses to a purse-snatching in the Del Amo Center parking lot Thursday rallied to help an elderly woman who

had just been robbed of her last dollar.

Mrs. Alice B. Miemeyer, 73, of 20641 Palm Way, was about to enter a drugstore at 3:30 p.m. to buy medicine for her husband when two men in a black sedan drove past. The driver reached out and grabbed Mrs. Miemeyer's purse, then fled south on Sepulveda Boulevard.

Mrs. Miemeyer and her husband are both Medi-Care patients and have little money. The \$28 stolen with the purse was all the couple had.

Seventh Fatality Counted

The seventh traffic fatality of the year in Torrance was recorded Wednesday night when a 19-year-old South Shores girl was fatally injured in a motorcycle mishap.

Naomi Usher, 909 Grenadier, South Shores, died shortly after being rushed to South Bay Emergency Hospital. She had been riding a motorcycle driven by William S. Powell, 24, of Long Beach.

Powell told police the two had been motoring down a steep hill near the corner of Via Mesa Verde and Calle Mayor when the vehicle skidded out of control and turned over.

Police said Miss Usher died of head injuries which might have been prevented had she been wearing a helmet.

Buy New Firm

Acquisition of American Medical Instruments, manufacturers of medical and surgical instruments, by Vermont Corp. has been announced here.

TORRANCE police officers investigating the robbery said they were impressed by the way witnesses came to the aid of the victim. Those observing the incident immediately took up a collection to purchase the needed medicine, police said.

One woman who witnessed the incident attempted to chase the suspect vehicle on foot and obtain a license number, but was unsuccessful. She had just helped the victim out of her car and had proceeded into the store when she heard Mrs. Miemeyer scream.

ANOTHER witness, also a woman, had just parked her car when she saw the incident. Without fear of personal injury, Mrs. Slingerland drove after the suspect vehicle, but was also unable to obtain the license number.

Returning to the scene, the woman drove Mrs. Miemeyer home in the victim's car. She instructed her 10-year-old daughter to walk home and get her husband to return and pick up their car.



MICHAEL L. MEEKS Gets Silver Star

LBJ Pins Medal on Area Man

President Lyndon B. Johnson pinned the nation's fourth highest military decoration on a Torrance navyman during his surprise visit to Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.

Navy Engineman 3/C Michael L. Meeks, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Meeks of 5208 Maricopa St., received the Silver Star Medal from the President Dec. 23.

Meeks was cited for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while he was serving in a Navy river patrol boat section in the Mekong Delta south of Saigon.

HEROIC action when enemy troops ambushed Meeks' patrol craft in the Bassac River last July earned the award for the local serviceman.

The attack began with a claymore mine explosion which wounded the five men aboard the boat. The blast was followed by heavy automatic weapons fire.

Meeks was thrown onto the deck from his position at the forward .50-caliber machine gun mount, receiving serious shrapnel wounds on his head and body. Disregarding pain and heavy bleeding, Meeks climbed back to his gun position and began firing into enemy positions.

AS MEEKS expended the last of his ammunition, another patrol craft arrived and poured heavy fire at the enemy. While the second craft engaged enemy forces, Meeks exposed himself openly to fire and moved to the back of his boat, where he (See AWARD, Page A-2)

Musicians Robbed of Two Guitars

More than \$1,000 worth of property was stolen during the holidays from the home of Torrance musicians David A. Thomas, 26, and Curt Barnabo, 29, of 18228 Ashley Ave.

Discovered missing Wednesday were two revolvers, a 12-string and a six-string guitar, a television set, 50 records, and a wine glass full of quarters and dimes, police said.

The musicians said they were out of town working between Dec. 25 and 27 when the burglar or burglars broke into the home.

Pair Arrested

Two Compton men suspected of taking two impact guns from the Torrance Sears store were apprehended Thursday by police. The impact guns, worth \$350, were found in their car.

Arrested were Richard E. Harrison, 28, and Donald E. Pickens, 34.

Market Robbed Again . . .

A Torrance market was robbed for the second time Wednesday by the same man who held up the store Dec. 18. The suspect, who got \$380 after pulling a gun on the clerk, was described as a man in his early 20s with blonde hair and a ruddy complexion. He had an eagle tattoo on his left forearm, it was noted.

School Board to Meet . . .

Trustees of the Torrance Unified School District will meet Tuesday at the district offices, 2335 Plaza del Amo. The session is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Copies of the agenda for the meeting may be examined in all five libraries in the city. Trustees must meet Tuesday because their regularly scheduled meeting falls on a legal holiday.

15 Cars Damaged in Crash . . .

The city's first 15-car accident occurred Friday afternoon at the corner of Ocean Avenue and Sepulveda when a car collided with a Pepsi-Cola truck. Thirteen other vehicles parked in an adjacent market lot were damaged by flying glass, police said. The truck, driven by Douglas C. White of Lakewood, was carrying a load of empty bottles when the accident occurred. Driver of the car involved, Paul H. Williams, 67, of 21405 Palos Verdes Blvd., was cited for a right-of-way violation. Neither vehicle sustained major damage.

(Continued on Page A-2)